Jury Being Selected in Theater Bombing Trial

Exclusive to The Times from a Staff Writer

SAN DIEGO—Jury selection will continue this week in the trial of a 30-year-old alleged Secret Army Organization member charged with bombing a sex films movie house here June 19.

The trial of William F. Yakopec, an unemployed El Cajon carpenter, is the first of seven cases resulting from an investigation by federal and local officials into the alleged activities of the SAO, described as a right-wing, paramilitary group once linked with the Minutemen.

Yakopec, in custody in lieu of $50,000 bail since his arrest 2½ months ago, has denied he was an SAO member.

He is charged with five counts of attempted murder, one of setting off a bomb in an inhabited area, two counts of assault with a deadly weapon (automobile) on a police officer and one count of possessing illegal explosives.

FBI Informant

Yakopec was indicted upon the testimony of Howard Berry Godfrey, a 29-year-old "home teacher" in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who, for five years, also worked as a paid informant for the FBI.

Godfrey, a former San Diego city fireman, told a grand jury he had infiltrated the SAO on behalf of the FBI and that he rose from a rank-and-file member to "assistant state commander" of the organization.

Authorities estimate that the fanatically anti-Communist, antipornography organization is composed of about 100 members in the Southwest, with between 15 and 20 in the San Diego area.

In addition to gaining Yakopec's confidence through their SAO associations, Godfrey was also Yakopec's home teacher and was the man responsible for bringing Yakopec into the Mormon faith, testimony revealed.

The bombing incident occurred at the "adults only" Guild Theater. While extensive damage was done to the movie house, none of the 12 persons in the audience was injured.

The other charges against Yakopec stem from the firing of a pistol into the house of former Cal State San Diego Prof. Peter Bohmer last Jan. 6, and an alleged attempt to run down an undercover officer with a car.